



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA

Technical Coordinating Committee

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Minutes of October 31, 2000

9:00 a.m. Greensboro, NC

ATTENDEES

| | | | |
|------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|---------------------------|
| Jim Westmoreland | TCC Chairman / GDOT | Paul Muschick | News & Record |
| Craig McKinney | GDOT | S. Frank Wyatt | Engineering & Inspections |
| Steve Kennedy | Engineering & Inspections | Judi Decker | Triad Reporting & Typing |
| Scott Walston | NCDOT, Statewide Planning | Gene Kimel | Town of Pleasant Garden |
| Libby James | GTA | Adam Fischer | GDOT |
| Scott Rhine | NCDOT, Public Transit | Veronica Dunlap | GDOT |
| Tyler Meyer | GDOT | | |

ACTION ITEMS

Jim Westmoreland called the meeting to order and asked all present to introduce themselves for the record.

Approval of Minutes of August 20, 2000, meeting

Chairman Westmoreland asked if there were any corrections, addenda, or actions to be taken. There being none, Mr. Rhine moved that the Minutes of the August 20, 2000, meeting be approved as written, seconded by Mr. Wyatt. The motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Minor MTIP Amendment No. 1, Reviewed August 10, 2000

Mr. Meyer first distinguished between a Major and a Minor Amendment. Major Amendments would typically involve major highway project scope changes or shifts between air quality horizon years, or a major transit fleet expansion project. Minor Amendments typically do not trigger new air quality analysis or involve major project schedule changes.

Amendment No. 1 was heard in the August 10th meeting, considered, and put out for public review and comment. It involves two project schedule changes. The first will accelerate right-of-way acquisition on the Greensboro Western Urban Loop (U-2524) from north of I-85 to North of High Point Road from post-year (which would be 2007 or sometime shortly thereafter) to Federal fiscal year 2001 (which started October 1st). While this does not change the construction schedule, it is the first step towards accelerating the entire project, which the draft TIP carries forward. Technically, the next step after TAC adoption would be for the Board of Transportation to authorize the right-of-way acquisition on that project. The Division 7 Right-of-Way Office reports that this has already

happened and that the right-of-way acquisition process has already begun. Nevertheless, it will still be important for the MPO to make this amendment.

The public transportation project involves the purchase of routine capital items (specifically bus shelters and benches) and will reschedule the purchase from fiscal year 2000 to fiscal year 2001. The expected implementation date is in April 2001.

These items went out to public review and were well-advertised, and publicized through a press release to area media outlets. No comments were received. The proposed action is for TCC to recommend TAC adoption. Following that, the Secretary of Transportation will approve it and it will be finalized.

Chairman Westmoreland stated that, in fact, this amendment would put money to purchase rights of way for the section of the Urban Loop which runs between I-85 and High Point Road, starting in 2001. The other project is for routine capital items for Transit. Mr. Kennedy moved that the Technical Coordinating Committee recommend approval of Minor MTIP Amendment No. 1 to the TAC, seconded by Mr. Wyatt. The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the TCC.

Minor MTIP Amendment No. 2, Reviewed August 10, 2000

Mr. Meyer said this item was discussed at the last meeting. The project involves replacing all the pedestrian and bicycle, school bus stop, and school warning signs on the State Highway System with new signs. There will be new fluorescent green signs. Progress around the State is well underway on this project.

The FHWA determined the need for an MTIP Amendment on this fairly late in the process. At this stage, this is really a technical amendment needed for accounting purposes so that all the Federal funds that are supposed to be programmed will have been, even though that project is essentially completed. A public review period is not recommended on this item because this is a Minor Amendment, it is already basically done, and is actually just a technicality. Also, under the Federal Regulations, public review is not required for this sort of Amendment.

Therefore, a motion from the TCC to recommend TAC adoption is needed. Mr. Rhine moved that the Technical Coordinating Committee recommend adoption of the MTIP Minor Amendment #2 to the TAC, seconded by Mr. Kennedy. The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the TCC.

Chairman Westmoreland said he had the opportunity to attend the NCDOT Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Summit on Tuesday, October 24, 2000, at the Koury Convention Center. He is very appreciative of the things that the NCDOT is currently doing with pedestrian safety. He encouraged them to keep up the good work.

Public Involvement in Policy Revision

Mr. Meyer said the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is a document which provides for MPO public involvement activities. It is required under the Federal Regulations and is also needed to provide basic structure for those activities. Periodically it needs to be reviewed.

There are actually two parts of our Public Involvement Plan at this time. One covers adopting the long-range transportation plan. That is not proposed to be updated or amended at this time because

we will not update the long-range plan at this time. When we do that, we can look at what that plan will entail, and what the best public involvement plan might be.

This revision will replace the provisions for adopting the Metropolitan TIP. There are several key differences which are described in the executive summary on the front of the handout.

- **Use additional media outlets.** This includes press releases, the MPO website, and the City's Local Access Cable Channel 13. The revisions provide for additional measures to be identified and experimented with to determine which means appear to be most effective.
- **Provide for more effective newspaper advertising.** Instead of requiring 7-days' consecutive advertising in the major papers, it will allow more targeted ads to run in subsequent weeks. The previous requirement for 7-consecutive days of advertising was cost-prohibitive for display ads since the cost would run over \$4,000. The excessive cost led to less expensive advertising in the legal section. People who are looking for information about transportation in their community do not look tend in the legal section. They look in the local or main section of the newspapers, so that is where we will put the display ads. This policy will require at least two ads be run in different weeks during the public review process.
- **Provide more flexibility in the timing of public meetings.** The current policy provides for an optional public meeting at the end of the public review process just prior to adoption. The revision will require at least one meeting to be held at the end, the beginning, or any point within that public review process. That flexibility is important and we will want to take advantage of it.
- **Distinguish between Major Amendments and Minor Amendments.** The distinction here is that a major amendment generally will involve additional air quality analysis or major expansion of the Transit fleet. A lot of the amendments which we have seen over the last year or so have been Minor Amendments: safety projects, individual Transit items, etc. This distinction will be helpful because minor amendment projects are typically things which are not controversial and for which the full process is inefficient and ineffective. However, the revisions do provide for an optional public review process with minor amendments.
- **Take additional steps to inform and involve minority and low income communities.** We have always tried to do that but with Federal requirements putting a new emphasis on this, it will be a higher bar to reach, and enhancements are needed. The revision will encourage attempting different methods to reach that sector of the community to determine effective strategies in the area. However, it does specify that at a minimum we will use targeted mailings to the mailing list that GTA uses for the same purpose. It has that provision, and it encourages the use of other similar and more innovative strategies.

The requested action is to forward this to the TAC for their consideration and recommend their preliminary approval. It will then be brought back for further consideration and adoption at a subsequent meeting. If comments are received, these will be discussed and possibly incorporated prior to adoption.

Chairman Westmoreland stated that the big changes were the increase in the levels that information will be shared through the media outlets, the issue of trying to target or identify strategies for involving lower income and minority communities in it, and then the issue of Major Amendments and Minor Amendments. Mr. Wyatt moved that the Technical Coordinating Committee recommend

the Revised Public Involvement Policy to the TAC, seconded by Mr. Rhine. The motion was approved by unanimous vote of the TCC.

BUSINESS/ADDITIONAL ACTION ITEMS

Draft Metropolitan TIP FY 2002 - 2008: Schedule and Project Status

Chairman Westmoreland said it was time to review the projects that have been identified in the draft MTIP. Due to technical difficulties with the projector, Chairman Westmoreland said he would go on to some other items while they were waiting for the presentation technology.

OTHER ITEMS

Airport Area Transportation Plan

Chairman Westmoreland said that an Airport Transportation Study is being developed by the Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation. Right now they are in the initial phase of that study and different alternatives and alignments which will possibly need to be considered in the airport area to accommodate future transportation needs. Mr. Walston is serving as the Chief Analyst on the study. Alternatives that are being considered include the possibilities of improvements to NC 68, a Pegg to Thatcher Connection, a re-alignment or extension of Sandy Ridge Road to tie into the proposed Airport Connector, an alternate alignment of I-73 to run more toward the airport to the Urban Loop, and connecting the Airport Connector to the Business 40/I-40 Interchange. Within the next few months, draft information should be available to share with the TCC and the TAC from the study.

Multi-Modal Transportation Center

Chairman Westmoreland stated that Mr. Rhine of the NCDOT Public Transportation Division, has been very helpful in this project and in helping to provide the leadership to move forward on scheduling and funding issues.

A briefing session is planned with the City Council for November the 28th to provide additional information about the project and where it stands. Right now, it appears that the money is going to be available to let us go to bid with Phase 1 construction. It is a project that has been in the planning stages for a long time. He said he had the opportunity to go to Denver, Colorado, recently with Tom Martin, Brent McKinney, Bill Wilder, and Jack Cavanaugh for the PART Board, for a conference called "Railvolution 2000." That conference brought home the perspective that we have a real opportunity here in the Triad collectively to start planning now for our future. A lot of these other systems have missed an opportunity because land use densities have increased to the point where they can no longer look at new corridors.

Market Street Western Urban Loop Interchange Removal

Chairman Westmoreland stated that a letter has been received from the NCDOT regarding proposed mitigation steps in connection with the Market Street Interchange removal from Loop construction plans. One recommendation was put forward, to add additional turn lanes at the Friendly Avenue Interchange at the Urban Loop. Given the expected impacts, and area growth and development, that appears insufficient. A meeting was held with NCDOT and these concerns were discussed. NCDOT was asked to look at five different additional mitigation items.

TAC will review these items later today. They include

- accelerate the Gallimore Dairy Road improvements from International Drive up to the Market Street to be open to traffic in 2002.
- study an extension of Gallimore Dairy Road running from Market Street up to Old Friendly Road to be open to traffic by 2005 if feasible. Mr. Richard Atkins presented information about that at the last meeting.
- construct intersection improvements at both Guilford College and Market Street, and at Guilford College Road and Friendly Avenue. Both of those locations have existing capacity problems and will be impacted.
- Construct improvements at the intersection of Stagecoach Trail and Market Street.

Draft Metropolitan TIP FY 2002 - 2008: Schedule and Project Status (continued)

Mr. Meyer distributed a list of major project changes and a letter from NCDOT regarding the Division Public Meetings. The draft TIP FY 2002-2008 process will briefly be as follows:

This MTIP will include a lengthy public review process. It will start with the release of the draft document in November. The draft will include the funding tables supplemented with explanatory information to make the document more user-friendly.

An MPO public meeting is scheduled for November 20th at the Greensboro Public Library in the Nussbaum Room from 5:00 to 6:00 p.m. The first half-hour will give everyone an opportunity to look at the displays and talk to the staff. The second half-hour or so will include presentations and the opportunity for comments and questions. On November 28th, the State Division 7 TIP meeting is being held at Bur-Mill Park from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Chairwoman Carmany will attend to give the MPO's perspective to the Board Member and the Division Engineer, as well as share any public comments received at the meeting the week before regarding the TIP.

Following that, an MPO Review Session will be held in December to provide the opportunity for some of the TAC members to meet with the Board member and Senior Programming Staff of NCDOT.

Mr. Meyer said a revised version of the MTIP with additional information and any project changes is expected to be released in January, and will be documents available for public review until the MTIP is adopted in early Spring.

The adoption of the document is currently scheduled for March. It will be accompanied by a new Air Quality Conformity Finding. That basically will say that the required Air Quality Analysis has been conducted by the State-wide Planning Branch, and that the MTIP complies with state and federal air quality standards

The State will adopt the State Transportation Improvement Program, including this MTIP, in July. The program will go into effect in October 1, 2001, the first day of federal fiscal year 2002.

Mr. Meyer then moved to the projects, and showed slides.

- Bridford Parkway Extension: No. 1 priority. Extend over I-40 to Guilford College Road by Big Tree Way. Right-of-way acquisition to begin fiscal year 2003, construction to start 2007,

open to traffic in 2008 or 2009. Will bypass Wendover Avenue and Guilford College Road Corridors to relieve congestion.

- Gallimore Dairy Road Widening: No. 2 priority. Widen highway between NC 68 south of I-40 to Market Street. Right-of-way to begin in 2006, construction in 2008. Will have new interchange at I-40 in 2002. Part of project to widen Gallimore Dairy to International Drive, but between 2002 and 2009 or 2010, when the TIP project will complete, there will be a two-lane bottleneck. Chairman Westmoreland will discuss this later with the Greensboro Western Urban Area Loop impacts, etc. Hope to accelerate to alleviate bottleneck.
- Greensboro Western Urban Loop: Project has been accelerated. I-40 to Bryan Boulevard portion already set for construction 2002. I-85 to I-40 portion was critical link. There will be gap between when Southern Loop Urban and Western Loop from I-40 Bryan will open. This will close that gap in time somewhat by beginning construction 2005, finishing in 2009, 2010, instead of 2015. Bryan Boulevard to Lawndale portion has been accelerated into the TIP, construction start 2007, ending 2010. Entire Western Loop open 2012, but before 2014.
- Guilford College Road Widening: No. 4 priority. Funding needs to be accelerated. Section to north and new location section south to High Point Road will open before this project is started. This would mean two-lane bottleneck in between. Accelerated from 2005 to 2004. Environmental analysis not finished until 2001-2002. MacKay Road to High Point will start in 2001 just before this widening.
- Market Street Widening: No. 3 priority. NC 68 to Colfax. Funding established for right-of-way, 2005; construction, 2008. NCDOT doing project to add a continuous center turn lane there between NC 68 and Sandy Ridge Road. City identified Bond project to add two additional through lanes onto that section. This may free up other NCDOT resources to be used elsewhere in the system. Chairman Westmoreland added that a three-lane section is now being added from Sandy Ridge Road back to NC 68. These will include a traffic signal at Market Street and Pleasant Ridge Road.
- US 421 Interchanges: No. 5 priority. Dangerous intersections to be replaced with grade separations. Woody Mill Road to north, right-of-way established 2006, construction 2008. Neely Road, right-of-way established 2006, construction after 2008.
- High Point Road Widening and Relocation: Hilltop to the new US 311 Bypass; eight mile project; six miles new roadway; two miles widening. Configuration not clear, under environmental process. Phase 1, from US 311 to Manor Road, construction delayed from 2003 to 2006. Phase 2, Manor Road to Hilltop Road, had been post-year project; construction 2007, 2010. Major project; \$67 million.
- Bryan Boulevard Relocation: Take from new interchange at Old Oak Ridge Road and relocate out of the way of the new runway. Will construct the new alignment to the north and bring back close to interchange with NC 68. Just a scope change, no schedule change. Construction, 2001-2003, completion 2005 in time for runway to open.
- NC 68 at Triad Center Drive Relocation: New project added to TIP. Was not on MPO priority needs, but will improve access to Triad Center Drive and reduce NC 68 delays. \$8 million. Replace current signalized intersection with an interchange. Construction, 2007.
- Sandy Ridge Road Connector: Last roadway priority need on list. Feasibility study scheduled, started fiscal year 2002. Study roadway connector aligning Sandy Ridge Road and Pleasant Ridge Road. Airport Area Transportation Study evaluating location and hopefully can help before feasibility study is begun to identify what alignments needs to be looked at. High Point very interested in this project.

- US 220 - NC 68 Connector: Runs from Rockingham County over to NC 68. Section on existing 220 on schedule, construction 2002, ending 2004. Will update existing 220 to Interstate standards, with a few exceptions to be updated in future. New section, connector, would begin just south of Haw River and go to NC 68. No funding attached. Right-of-way moved to 2008, last year in this TIP. Will be limited access freeway built to Interstate standards.
- US 220/Future I-73 Feasibility Study: Study upgrading 220 from I-85 to Asheboro. Feasibility study scheduled.
- Multi-Modal Transportation Center Phase 2: Rail improvements. Necessary to bring AMTRAK station up to multi-modal transportation center. Track improvements and some station work. Draft TIP schedules construction funds for 2004-2005. Hopefully can be accelerated in future.
- Safety Projects - US 29 at McKnight Mill Road: Problem location for pedestrian crossing over fence. Proposed pedestrian bridge, construction, 2002.
- Bicentennial Trail: Guilford County submitted application to fund the portion from Gallimore Dairy up across I-40 to Chimney Rock relocation being built to accommodate trail; request picks up again at Burnt Poplar Road to Swing Road to Martin Street. Will be on existing roadways, sidewalk improvements. Had been identified as priority also. County requested \$1.4 million for project; received about \$750,000. County identified matching funds from Park & Recreation bonds. Fifth largest enhancement awarded this year.

Chairman Westmoreland asked for the total dollar commitment for 2002, as far as the TIP is concerned, and what that relates to in terms of dollars in the MPO. Mr. Meyer said he had not calculated it at this point. He would submit this information as soon as it became available.

Chairman Westmoreland said that he thought that the regional scope of a lot of these projects is significant, whether it is High Point Road, 421 improvements, or the Outer Loop improvements. There is a lot of regional value to those projects. Most of the project work is being done in the County, not inside the City Limits of Greensboro. He thought that was a trend that shows a lot of the growth in this community is heading out towards the fringe areas and how this is being accommodating with transportation improvements.

OTHER ITEMS (CONTINUED)

Merritt Drive Bridge Closing

Mr. Fischer said the closing was set for November 15th. I-40 is currently on schedule for completion in 2002.

Comprehensive Plan

Mr. Martin said preliminary visioning is to be done November 28th with the Steering Committee and on the 29th there will be presentations by department heads including GDOT.

Closing Remarks

Chairman Westmoreland expressed thanks to all the people from the State. He said he really appreciated the work of Doug Galyon with the Draft TIP. Mr. Galyon has always been a champion of this community and the MPO in how he had set up projects and provided funding for those projects.

Chairman Westmoreland said things would be changing next year with the Board. The Board of Transportation will be going from 24 members down to 19 members. There will be one representative from each of the respective divisions, and then five at-large Board members. At a recent meeting, Ms. Becky Smothers made the point that we need to be lobbying hard and effectively to get one of those at-large Board members as the representative of the Triad Region. He felt that was important.

He further stated that from a public transportation standpoint, it seems the time is right to begin looking at other types of funding for those improvements besides gas tax revenues for primary funding source. The other successful systems have a different stream of revenue which provides more stable long-term funding sources. It seems to work for their communities and also works from the standpoint of being able to better leverage those State and Federal funds for those projects.

Mr. Kimel stated that Pleasant Garden has an agreement with the State Highway Department on the interchange at Neely Road. Also since Highway 22 or Alliance Church Road is now being cut at 421, the traffic has picked up considerably on Neely Road. He was wondering if there could be a traffic count there just to determine just how much traffic has increased and then look at Neely Road at a later date for improvements.

Chairman Westmoreland said he felt they could certainly work with the State to get some traffic count numbers there. They might also be able to help with suggestions on what improvements might be necessary. As access changes, the traffic has got to go somewhere. One thing evident with the Market Street and Urban Loop interchange issues is that where there is a lot of existing traffic and significant access limitations occur, the traffic will go into locations that currently may already have problems. We want to work with the State as much as we can because we know they have limitations in what they can do. In the future, it will truly take a partnership of all parties, State, Local and Federal to make things happen.

The next TCC meeting scheduled for December 13, 2000, at 9:00 a.m.

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There being no further discussion or comments, the meeting was adjourned at 10:00 a.m.